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PROGRESS THROUGH THE POWER OF IDEAS

The question was asked, recently, if the Suggestion Awards Program can pay awards for substantive as well as technical suggestions. If by substantive we mean the programs and projects which are the essence of our mission, the answer is "Yes." The authority to make such payments is contained in Public Law 763 (83rd Congress) which states in part:

"The head of each department is authorized to pay cash awards to...employees of the Government who by their suggestions, inventions, superior accomplishments, or other personal efforts contribute to the efficiency, economy, or other improvement of Government operations or who perform special acts or services in the public interest in connection with or related to their official employment."

With respect to the phrase, "related to their official employment," the Suggestion Awards Committee normally grants awards for ideas which are not in the employee's line of duty; whereas, the Honor and Merit Awards Board can grant awards for exceptional performance or service. Both boards can recommend awards up to \$5,000 in cash.

The Suggestion Awards Committee, by regulation, emphasizes recognition for improvements in efficiency, inventions, security, work conditions, safety, morale, and procedures. In Fiscal Year

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1960 the Suggestion Awards Program paid \$2,555 for suggestions of a technical nature and \$4,835 for suggestions which contributed to the efficiency of our operations; for example: improving pouching procedures, streamlining security-clearance requests, and annotating certain intelligence source materials.

There is a duly constituted Special Panel which considers suggestions relating to operational activities. This Panel has recommended many awards for technical devices and has considered suggestions relating to [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] and methods for exploiting intelligence sources. To date these ideas have not earned awards, either because they were already in effect (but unknown to the suggester), were not feasible or practical, or were not in harmony with National Policy. To overcome this, and as a result of an employee suggestion, another Special Suggestion Panel has been approved which will stimulate new operational ideas and sponsor the adoption of the feasible ideas.